

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03806 071501Z
ACTION SS-25

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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
USCINCEUR VAHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3806

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, LE, IS, SY
SUBJ: FIGHTING IN BEIRUT: POSSIBLE US INITIATIVES

1. AS OF NOON JULY 7 THE CEASE-FIRE IN BEIRUT IS STILL
HOLDING AND PRESIDENT SARKIS IS STILL DELIBERATING ON
WHETHER OR NOT TO RESIGN. EVEN IF HE DECIDES TO WITHDRAW
HIS RESIGNATION, HOWEVER, AND NEITHER SIDE RESUMES THE
FIRING HERE, THE SITUATION REMAINS EXTREMELY TENSE AND DELI-
CATE AND WE WILL HAVE TO MOVE FAST AND FORCEFULLY TO AVOID
RENEWED FIGHTING.

2. IN ORDER TO BREAK OUT OF THE PRESENT IMPASSE, WE PROPOSE
THAT THE USG UNDERTAKE THE FOLLOWING INITIATIVES:

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3. THE AMBASSADOR SPEAK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO CAMILLE
CHAMOUN AND PIERRE GEMAYEL ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES: THE USG
WAS DEEPLY DISTURBED BY THE SENSELESS SLAUGHTER OF INNOCENT
CIVILIANS IN EAST BEIRUT BETWEEN JULY 1 AND JULY 5 AND
PLAYED ITS ROLE IN GETTING THE SHOOTING STOPPED, AT LEAST
TEMPORARILY. HOWEVER, THE CHRISTIAN MILITIA LEADERS SHOULD
NOT REPEAT NOT INTERPRET OUR ACTIONS AS SUPPORT FOR THEIR

DEMANDS OR FOR ANY SEPARATIST TENDENCIES THAT SOME CHRISTIAN LEADERS MAY HAVE. WE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE UNITY OF LEBANON AND THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT SARKIS AND WE INTEND TO DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO STRENGTHEN THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT. WE BELIEVE THAT SYRIAN UNITS OF THE ADF HAVE AN IMPORTANT PART TO PLAY IN ESTABLISHING SECURITY IN LEBANON AND THAT THE CHRISTIAN MILITIA LEADERS MUST BE PREPARED TO COOPERATE WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS IN ESTABLISHING THEIR PROPER ROLE. THE CHRISTIAN MILITIA LEADERS SHOULD BE UNDER NO ILLUSION THAT THE USG WILL PROVIDE THEM WITH DIRECT OR INDIRECT MATERIAL ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING VIA ISRAEL, IF THEY BECOME INVOLVED IN ANOTHER CONFLICT WITH ADF FORCES. THEY SHOULD ALSO KNOW THAT WE INTEND TO USE ALL OF OUR INFLUENCE WITH THE ISRAELIS TO ASSURE THAT THERE IS NO REPEAT NO ISRAELI INTERVENTION IN ANY RENEWED FIGHTING IN BEIRUT. DCM OR POLOFF WOULD PASS SAME MESSAGE TO BACHIR GEMAYEL.

4. AMBASSADOR LEWIS SHOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO INFORM WEIZMAN THAT ISRAELI ACTIONS, SUCH AS THE OVERFLIGHTS OF BEIRUT ON JULY 6, AND THE GOI STATEMENT DENOUNCING "MASSACRE OF CHRISTIANS" CAN ONLY ENCOURAGE THE INTRANSIGENCE OF THE HARDLINE CHRISTIAN LEADERS IN LEBANON AND MAKE THEM LESS LIKELY TO MAKE THE DIFFICULT BUT ESSENTIAL CONCESSIONS REQUIRED OF THEM. WE THEREFORE CONTINUE TO URGE THAT THE ISRAELIS INSTRUCT ALL REPEAT ALL THE CHRISTIAN LEADERS TO EXERCISE THE UTMOST RESTRAINT AND URGE THEM TO AVOID THE SLIGHTEST PRO-CONFIDENTIAL

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VOCATION OF THE SYRIAN ADF FORCES. THE ISRAELIS SHOULD KNOW THAT THE USG HAS NO REPEAT NO INTENTION OF SUPPORTING THE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS AGAINST THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OF PRESIDENT SARKIS OR THE ADF FORCES ACTING ON HIS BEHALF AND THAT WE WOULD MOST STRONGLY OPPOSE ANY ISRAELI INTERVENTION OF WHATEVER KIND ON BEHALF OF CHRISTIAN MILITIAS.

5. USG SHOULD APPROACH OTHER INTERESTED ARAB GOVERNMENTS, PARTICULARLY THE SAUDIS AND KUWAITIS, AND URGE THEM TO COUNSEL RESTRAINT ON THE SYRIANS. WE SHOULD ALSO TELL THESE GOVERNMENTS WHAT WE ARE DOING VIS-A-VIS THE OTHER PARTIES AND SEEK THEIR ADVICE ON OTHER USEFUL STEPS WE MIGHT TAKE. WE SHOULD ALSO CONSULT FULLY WITH FRENCH AND BRITISH AND SEEK THEIR IDEAS.

6. WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE SYRIANS, EXPLAINING, AS WE HAVE DONE FOR THE PAST THREE DAYS, THAT WE APPRECIATE THE ROLE THEY HAVE PLAYED IN LEBANON AND UNDERSTAND THE DIFFICULTIES AND FRUSTRATIONS OF THEIR POSITION. ON THE OTHER HAND, IT IS OBVIOUSLY IN THE INTEREST OF ALL OF US TO AVOID ANOTHER OUTBREAK OF MAJOR FIGHTING IN BEIRUT WHICH COULD LEAD TO MORE SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES IN THE

REGION AS A WHOLE. WE SHOULD TELL THE SYRIANS THAT WE WILL BE CONSULTING VERY CLOSELY WITH OTHER PARTIES AND PARTICULARLY WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS AND THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON IN THE COMING FEW DAYS TO TRY TO DEVELOP A SOLUTION THAT MEETS OUR COMMON GOAL OF REBUILDING A UNITED LEBANON UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LED BY PRESIDENT SARKIS.

7. WE REALIZE NONE OF THE ABOVE IS NEW AND DOES NOT INCLUDE A PLAN FOR A SOLUTION BUT WE BELIEVE THESE APPROACHES WILL MOVE US IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION.
PARKER

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